

### **T-38-1 – “Using GIS to Locate Potential Western Xeric Sandhill Woodlands and Saline Prairie Habitat Sites Within Louisiana”**

*Abstract:* There is little data currently available regarding the extent and condition of state and globally imperiled western xeric sandhill woodlands and saline prairies within the West Gulf Coastal Plain of Louisiana. According to the Louisiana Wildlife Action Plan (WAP), these two natural community types are considered critical habitat for 18 species of conservation concern, including the Louisiana pine snake (*Pituophis ruthveni*) and western slender glass lizard (*Ophisaurus attenuatus*). This project was initiated to identify sites that might potentially support either western xeric sandhills or saline prairies, and thereby provide potential habitat for these wildlife species of conservation concern. Existing mapped data were used including: soils maps, aerial photos, topographic maps, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) stream layers and vegetation types. Using GIS capabilities, polygons were created for the identified potential habitat areas. GIS data layers were created that identified potential land areas within the ranges of western xeric sandhill woodlands and saline prairies that might support these two habitat types. This project identified a total of 406 potential locations of western xeric sandhill woodland communities comprising 16,192 acres and 258 potential locations of saline prairies total 526 acres. The sandhills are concentrated in northwest Louisiana, especially in Bienville Parish, while saline prairies are not as centralized, but more dispersed along the western parishes of the state. Follow-up surveys of these identified areas will be done by LA Natural Heritage staff now that the project has been completed.

(**Abstract excerpted from:** “*Summary Report, Using GIS to Locate Potential Western Xeric Sandhill Woodland and Saline Prairie Habitat Sites Within Louisiana (T-38)*”; Final Report (September 2006); Faulkner, P.; Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries; Baton Rouge, LA; 2 pp.)

This grant was closed 31 August 2006. **For more information** about State Wildlife Grant T-38, or to obtain copies of interim or final reports, please contact the State Wildlife Grant Coordinator, LDWF Fur & Refuge Division.